



## **King County**

**Dow Constantine**

King County Executive

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June 18, 2020

Ken Price

President/Business Agent

Amalgamated Transit Union Local 587

2815 Second Ave., Suite 230

Seattle, WA 98121

Re: Reopening economic terms of ATU Local 587's 2019-2022 collective bargaining agreement

Dear Ken:

On February 20, 2020, King County's and ATU Local 587's negotiators shook hands and celebrated a comprehensive tentative agreement for a collective bargaining agreement spanning November 1, 2019, through October 31, 2022. This tentative agreement was reached after nine months of good faith, interest-based, negotiations that started in April 2019. As explained below, based on the extreme, unforeseen impacts of COVID-19 on the County's current and projected transit budget, I am asking you to join us in making changes to the 2019 – 2022 collective bargaining agreement to prevent even deeper cuts to transit service and jobs.

As you know, the County and ATU bargained terms for a successor agreement that adds approximately \$80 million to Metro's budget. The increase comes from wage increases for approximately 4600 bargaining unit members of 3 percent for 2020-21, 3 percent for 2021-22 and 4 percent for 2022-23, as well as a one-time \$1,000 per employee ratification incentive.

Days after the parties concluded bargaining, the world, including Metro's finances, began to change radically. In addition to a dramatic loss of revenue from a collapse in sales tax receipts, decreased ridership, and the implementation of fare waiver to protect operators, the County faces the prospective loss of Seattle Transportation Benefit District funds, a substantial revenue source. While the County plans to use reserves as well as federal reimbursement from the CARES Act to help manage the near-term budget deficit, a gaping deficit remains.

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As we have recently discussed, in the span of three months, Metro went from growing its transit service and workforce to facing an unprecedented shortfall. In the last two weeks, Metro's budget has become dramatically worse, necessitating urgent remediation planning. The June 4 adopted forecast for Metro reflects an estimated revenue loss for 2020-2028 of greater than \$2.2 billion, including a sales tax loss of \$465 million for 2020-2022 alone. Budget cuts to County transit programs, operations and personnel are now unavoidable.

By joining together, as labor and management, to modify a labor agreement reached in a different context – before Metro's finances turned upside down -- we can reduce the need for more extreme cuts and job losses. The workforce impact of this unprecedented economic downturn is a shared problem. We must seek a shared solution.

We need to reopen negotiations without delay, before the new collective bargaining agreement is sent from the Executive to the County Council. I am asking for ATU Local 587's commitment to reopen the economic provisions of the contract to save service and jobs.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Dow Constantine". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Dow Constantine  
King County Executive